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Follow-up to the recommendations of the Permanent Forum: economic and social development

Analysis prepared by the secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues: economic and social development

Summary

The present document seeks to provide an analysis of the implementation of the recommendations of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues on economic and social development, from the second to the seventh sessions.

The report is divided into five sections. The first section introduces the main issues at hand. The second section provides an overview of the recommendations on economic and social development that the Forum has issued throughout its sessions. The third section provides a progress report on the implementation of recommendations on economic and social development. The fourth section addresses obstacles and facilitating factors to the implementation of these recommendations. The final section draws conclusions and recommendations.

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I. Introduction

1. Economic and social development is one of the six mandated areas of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. Throughout its seven sessions, the Permanent Forum has issued recommendations on a broad range of issues pertaining to economic and social development. These recommendations have been directed, for the most part, towards the agencies of the United Nations system, Governments and indigenous peoples' organizations. It is crucial to point out that, despite progress, the challenges that indigenous peoples face around the world persist.

2. The present document seeks to provide an analysis of the implementation of the recommendations of the Permanent Forum on economic and social development from the second to the seventh sessions, based on reports received from Governments, United Nations agencies and other intergovernmental bodies, non-governmental organizations and indigenous peoples' organizations. It does not constitute a global analysis of the economic and social situation of the indigenous peoples of the world.

3. Given the broad nature of the subject, in addition to addressing recommendations specifically issued under the economic and social development agenda item from each session, the analysis will also include the following: recommendations issued under special themes, including the Millennium Development Goals; recommendations issued under some of the ongoing themes and priorities of the Permanent Forum, including data collection and disaggregation and urban indigenous peoples and migration; relevant recommendations under future work of the Forum; and recommendations on economic and social development issued under region-specific agenda items (e.g., the half-day discussion on Asia during the sixth session).

4. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples constitutes the most comprehensive international legal instrument addressing the human rights of indigenous peoples. Article 3 of the Declaration states: "Indigenous peoples have the right to self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development".[1] In Article 23, the Declaration clearly lays out indigenous peoples' right to development: "Indigenous peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for exercising their right to development. In particular, indigenous peoples have the right to be actively involved in developing and determining health, housing and other economic and social programmes affecting them and, as far as possible, to administer such programmes through their own institutions".[2] These articles and others linked to them should guide all development processes and activities carried out with indigenous peoples.

[1] General Assembly resolution 61/295, art. 3.

[2] Ibid., art. 23.

II. Overview of recommendations and thematic areas

5. The Permanent Forum has issued recommendations on economic and social development during all of its sessions. In total, between the second and seventh sessions, the Forum issued approximately 150 recommendations on economic and social development, including those issued under agenda items other than economic and social development.

6. The Forum has paid particular attention to participation/representation of indigenous peoples in development processes, the Millennium Development Goals, data collection and disaggregation and urban indigenous peoples and migration. The Forum has also repeatedly recommended that United Nations agencies, international financial institutions and other development actors change their paradigms and approaches in their work with indigenous peoples, including increased mainstreaming of indigenous peoples' issues in their work, respect for the principle of free, prior and informed consent, recognition of collective rights, and increased participation from indigenous peoples in programme design, implementation and monitoring.

A. Recommendations from the second session

7. During the second session (11-23 May 2003), the Permanent Forum recommended that the agencies and bodies of the United Nations system and international financial institutions, "rethink the concept of development, with the full participation of indigenous peoples in development processes, taking into account the rights of indigenous peoples and the practices of their traditional knowledge".[3] The Forum also called upon the United Nations system, other intergovernmental organizations and Governments to establish "processes of meaningful participation and partnership with indigenous communities" in development processes, including the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and the poverty reduction strategy papers.[4] These two recommendations highlight one of the most crucial issues that the Forum has addressed in the context of economic and social development, namely the need for United Nations agencies, Governments and other actors to essentially change the way they work with indigenous peoples.

8. The Forum addressed, for the first time, the issues of urban indigenous peoples and migration, inviting Governments, local authorities and United Nations agencies to adopt policies and take measures to meet the needs of indigenous peoples in urban areas. The Forum also recommended that States and the United Nations system implement projects to diversify productive activities and income sources as a means to reduce internal and external migration.

9. The Forum addressed a series of recommendations at international financial institutions, notably requesting that international finance institutions formulate development policies for indigenous peoples, recognize the principle of free, prior and informed consent and compile and disseminate best practices.

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[3] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2003, Supplement No. 23* (E/2003/43, para. 26).

[4] Ibid., para. 29.

10. Finally, the Forum addressed the issue of data collection and disaggregation by calling for an expert workshop on the subject.

B. Recommendations from the third session[5]

11. During its third session (held from 10-21 May 2004), the Forum examined the theme of indigenous women. In this context, the Forum urged Governments to integrate a gender framework into all areas of their work and develop and implement policies to benefit indigenous women. The Forum also issued a broad recommendation to Governments to include the needs and rights of indigenous peoples in laws and policies, including the right to participation, and to develop policies for employment creation targeted at indigenous peoples.

12. The Forum addressed a series of recommendations to United Nations agencies and international financial institutions requesting that, together with Governments, they work towards ensuring the equal rights of indigenous women. This included developing programmes to address the underlying causes of indigenous women's marginalization, performing needs assessments, involving indigenous women in all phases of the programme cycle, and designing microfinance programmes.

13. The Forum recognized the importance of the Millennium Development Goals, calling upon United Nations agencies to work in collaboration with indigenous peoples towards their achievement and recommending that additional indicators be developed to better assess environmental sustainability. The issue of migration was also addressed again, and the Forum called upon United Nations agencies to strengthen their work on the issue. The Forum also addressed specific recommendations to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) regarding their work with indigenous peoples.

14. Finally, regarding the issue of future work, the Forum urged donor agencies and States to incorporate indigenous peoples' issues into development cooperation policies and joint programmes in order to effectively mainstream these issues into their work.

C. Recommendations from the fourth session[6]

15. During its fourth session (16-27 May 2005), the Permanent Forum began a two-year in-depth examination of the theme "Millennium Development Goals and Indigenous Peoples". Specifically, the Forum addressed Goal 1 (eradicate extreme poverty and hunger) and Goal 2 (achieve universal primary education).

16. Regarding Goal 1, the Forum subdivided its recommendations into three broad areas: framework and capacity-building, implementation and monitoring, and other follow-up. Under framework and capacity-building, the Forum underlined the need for multicultural policies and affirmative action in order to reduce poverty among indigenous communities. The Forum called upon States, the United Nations system and other intergovernmental organizations to "support the efforts of indigenous

[5] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2004, Supplement No. 23* (E/2004/43).

[6] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2005, Supplement No. 23* (E/2005/43).

peoples to build, articulate and implement their visions of and strategies for development".[7] This involves providing adequate funding, technical support and training, as well as ensuring the active participation of indigenous peoples in all stages of policymaking regarding the Millennium Development Goals. The Forum also emphasized that the human rights-based approach to programming should underpin all efforts towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, including poverty reduction strategies. The Forum called for the development of poverty indicators based on indigenous peoples' perspectives. The Forum also recommended that Governments, the United Nations system and other intergovernmental organizations develop capacity-building programmes on indigenous peoples' issues for their staff.

17. Under implementation and monitoring, the Forum stressed the need for indigenous peoples' active participation in national Millennium Development Goal monitoring processes, as well as in the development and implementation of frameworks such as the common country assessment/UNDAF and poverty reduction strategy papers. In this regard, the Forum recommended that national Millennium Development Goal reports include the situation and perspectives of indigenous peoples. The Forum also called upon the United Nations system and donor agencies to develop and/or implement policies on indigenous peoples, including a specific recommendation to the World Bank to include indigenous peoples in the revision of their policy. Finally, the Forum reiterated its call for improved disaggregation of data on indigenous peoples and poverty.

18. Under other follow-up, the Forum addressed specific recommendations to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), IFAD, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and the World Bank regarding capacity-building, the development of policies and guidelines, and indicators on the right to food.

19. Following the international expert Workshop on Data Collection and Disaggregation for Indigenous Peoples,[8] held following a recommendation made by the Forum at its third session, the Forum made a series of recommendations on the subject, including a call to the United Nations Statistics Division and regional commissions to mainstream statistical issues pertaining to indigenous peoples. The Forum also recommended that the principle of free, prior and informed consent, as well as the right to participation, be respected in the context of data collection. Finally, the Forum called for increased capacity-building for indigenous peoples on data collection processes.

D. Recommendations from the fifth session[9]

20. The Forum continued its examination of the Millennium Development Goals during its fifth session (15-26 May 2006), which focused on the need to redefine the Goals to better address the needs of indigenous peoples. In this regard, the Forum reaffirmed that self-determination, free, prior and informed consent, and accountability form the basis of true partnerships for development. In this regard,

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[7] Ibid., para. 12.

[8] See E/C.19/2004/2.

[9] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2006, Supplement No. 23* (E/2006/43).

the Forum called for increased participation from indigenous peoples in United Nations Development Assistance Framework processes and Millennium Development Goal monitoring. The Forum also reiterated its recommendation to better address and include indigenous peoples in national Millennium Development Goal reporting. To facilitate this work, the Forum recommended that United Nations agencies appoint focal points on indigenous issues at the regional level in order to form regional inter-agency groups.

21. The Forum called for an expert group meeting on indigenous peoples and migration and the establishment of a task force on migration in the Inter-Agency Support Group on indigenous peoples.

22. The Forum revisited the issue of data collection and disaggregation, highlighting its importance for the monitoring and evaluation of the Millennium Development Goals. The Forum recommended that the Inter-Agency Support Group on indigenous peoples convene a technical workshop on indicators. The Forum also invited Governments, United Nations agencies and academic institutions to support the convening of regional workshops on indicators of poverty and well-being for indigenous peoples.

23. During its fifth session, the Forum also issued a series of recommendations on indigenous peoples in Africa, including calls for improved data disaggregation and improved coordination by all actors involved to address the challenges faced by indigenous peoples in the region.

E. Recommendations from the sixth session[10]

24. During its sixth session (14-25 May 2007), the Permanent Forum once again stated that indigenous peoples' rights and aspirations must be taken into account within the context of the Millennium Development Goals. The Forum reiterated its concern that national Millennium Development Goal reports do not sufficiently address the situation of indigenous peoples. The Forum also called upon international financial institutions to target indigenous peoples in their micro-finance mechanisms.

25. The Permanent Forum devoted a half-day discussion to indigenous peoples in Asia, and in this context issued a series of recommendations on economic and social development. Another half-day discussion was devoted to urban indigenous peoples and migration. The Forum once again recommended that States cooperate with indigenous peoples to provide better employment and economic development opportunities. The Forum also recommended that the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) carry out a study on the psychosocial effects of migration on indigenous children.

26. The Forum once again addressed the issue of data collection and disaggregation, calling for improved Millennium Development Goal indicators that effectively address the concerns of indigenous peoples, for inclusion of indigenous peoples' issues in Human Development Reports, and for the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) to continue its work on data disaggregation in Latin America and the Caribbean.

[10] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2007, Supplement No. 23* (E/2007/43).

F. Recommendations from the seventh session[11]

27. At its seventh session (21 April-2 May 2008), the Permanent Forum addressed the theme "Climate change, bio-cultural diversity and livelihoods: the stewardship role of indigenous peoples and new challenges". In this context, the Forum recognized that climate change is an urgent threat to human rights and sustainable development and called for "urgent, serious and unprecedented action"[12] on the issue.

28. In terms of economic and social development, the Forum welcomed the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) guidelines on indigenous peoples' issues, encouraging United Nations agencies to implement and disseminate them. The Forum once again urged States and State-owned corporations to respect the right to free, prior and informed consent. The Forum also reiterated its concerns regarding the inclusion of indigenous peoples' issues in national Millennium Development Goal reports, global, regional and national human development reports, and national development processes. This included a call to UNDP to include indigenous experts in the development of human development reports. The Forum called upon United Nations agencies to improve the sharing of information with indigenous peoples at the local level so that indigenous peoples can better engage with the United Nations at the country level. The Forum also addressed specific recommendations on institutional capacity and participation to UNDP, FAO and ILO.

29. The Forum devoted a half-day discussion to the Pacific region, recommending that the United Nations system implement the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. The Forum also recommended that United Nations agencies review their operations to better address the needs of the Pacific region.

30. The Forum once again addressed urban indigenous peoples and migration, recommending that ECLAC and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) conduct studies on the issue. Regarding data collection and disaggregation, the Forum welcomed the global synthesis report on indicators of well-being and poverty,[13] and invited United Nations agencies, States and indigenous peoples' organizations to use the indicators as a guide in programmes and policies involving indigenous peoples. The Forum also requested that the Statistics Commission advocate for the promotion of indigenous issues in 2010 censuses and demographic and health surveys.

31. While addressing its future work, the Forum welcomed the establishment in Bolivia of the National Council for Dialogue among indigenous peoples and the United Nations system, encouraging other countries to replicate this example. Finally, the Forum welcomed the report on the International Workshop on Perspectives of Relationships between Indigenous Peoples and Industrial Companies,[14] calling upon States to support and implement the recommendations in the report.

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[11] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2008, Supplement No. 23* (E/2008/43).

[12] Ibid., para. 23.

[13] E/C.19/2008/9.

[14] E/C.19/2008/5/Add.6.

III. Progress report on the implementation of recommendations

32. In order to facilitate the analysis of the implementation of the recommendations of the Permanent Forum on economic and social development, these are grouped into the following categories:

(a) Recommendations on changing paradigms and approaches to development;

(b) Recommendations on the Millennium Development Goals;

(c) Recommendations on urban indigenous peoples and migration;

(d) Recommendations on indicators and data collection and disaggregation.

33. The following table summarizes progress towards the implementation of the recommendations of the Permanent Forum on economic and social development.[15]

Session	*Number of recommendations*	*Implementation ongoing*	*Implementation completed*	*Implementation not initiated or reporting not received*
Third	17	7 (41 per cent)	2 (12 per cent)	8 (47 per cent)
Fourth	40	26 (65 per cent)	3 (7.5 per cent)	11 (27.5 per cent)
Fifth	33	15 (45 per cent)	2 (6 per cent)	16 (49 per cent)
Sixth	19	8 (42 per cent)	0 (0 per cent)	11 (58 per cent)
Total	**109**	**56 (52 per cent)**	**7 (6 per cent)**	**46 (42 per cent)**

A. Recommendations on changing paradigms and approaches to development

34. While these are certainly among the most difficult recommendations to implement and monitor, given the broad nature of the subject, a great deal of progress has been made, particularly by United Nations agencies. First and foremost, the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples by the General Assembly in September 2007 has provided a strong impetus in this direction.

35. It is especially important to highlight the fact that several agencies have adopted and/or revised their policies on indigenous peoples, including the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the Asian Development Bank and UNDP. Both FAO and IFAD are in the process of developing policies. The United Nations Development Group adopted guidelines on indigenous peoples' issues in February 2008, which are being used by United Nations country teams to guide their work on indigenous peoples' issues. In the same context, the secretariat of the Permanent Forum, UNFPA and ILO have produced a resource kit on indigenous peoples'

[15] Please note that this table includes information only on the third to sixth sessions, as these are the only ones for which data is available on the Permanent Forum Recommendations Database at the time of writing; the database is available at: www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/recommendations.htm.

Issues. The Forum secretariat has also developed, and is currently rolling out, a training module on indigenous peoples' issues for United Nations staff working at the country level.

36. Certain agencies, such as IFAD, ILO and UNDP, have contributed significantly to the implementation of the recommendations of the Forum on economic and social development. IFAD has continuously emphasized the fact that indigenous peoples are disproportionately represented among the world's rural poor and has taken action to mainstream indigenous peoples' issues into its activities, including supporting capacity-building activities to allow indigenous peoples' organizations to be better equipped to participate in poverty reduction strategy paper processes. IFAD has provided the Forum secretariat with grants to undertake in-depth case studies of IFAD-financed projects to identify best practices on how development projects can help strengthen indigenous peoples' own perspectives and practices of development in order to reach the Millennium Development Goals, and carry out work on indicators.

37. UNDP has consistently reported to the Forum on its work with indigenous peoples at the local, national and regional levels. The Global Environmental Facility Small Grants Programme and the UNDP Regional Indigenous Peoples Programme in South-East Asia are two particularly important initiatives in this regard. UNDP has also established an advisory committee on indigenous issues at headquarters level.

38. ILO has reported on a broad range of activities carried out through its project to promote ILO policy on indigenous and tribal peoples (PRO 169). Activities have included capacity-building for staff from ILO headquarters and field offices, and bilateral and multilateral agencies, local-level studies on indigenous peoples and the Millennium Development Goals in Bolivia, Cambodia, Cameroon, Guatemala and Nepal, ethnic audits of poverty reduction strategy papers, and research and development of indicators on indigenous peoples' employment, including traditional occupations.

39. Another starting trend is the establishment of indigenous consultative committees in United Nations country teams and at the regional level. The Bolivia United Nations country team has established a consultative group made up of indigenous leaders to provide guidance on its work. UNICEF has established a similar body to advise on its programming on indigenous peoples' issues in Latin America and the Caribbean. The United Nations country team of Ecuador has established an inter-agency theme group on intercultural affairs and regularly reports to the Forum.

40. In terms of common country assessment and United Nations Development Assistance Framework processes, desk reviews carried out by the secretariat of the Permanent Forum in 2006, 2007 and 2008 have found that, barring a few exceptions, indigenous peoples' issues are not sufficiently addressed in these programming documents and indigenous peoples' participation is not being taken into account.

41. States have also reported on progress in implementing the recommendations of the Permanent Forum on changing approaches to development, although to a lesser extent than United Nations agencies. The Governments of Canada, Finland, Mexico and Norway, for example, have reported on programmes to improve living

conditions and employment opportunities of indigenous communities, particularly among indigenous women. The Government of Argentina has reported on the work of the National Institute for Indigenous Affairs, which provides technical and financial assistance for the implementation of development projects with the participation of indigenous peoples. The Government of Spain reported that 6 per cent of the budget of the Agencia Espanola de Cooperacion Internacional is allocated to cooperation with indigenous peoples. The Russian Federation has also contributed to the Forum's work on economic and social development through its support to expert group meetings, including the International Workshop on Perspectives of Relationships between Indigenous Peoples and Industrial Companies, held in Salekhard, Russian Federation, on 2 and 3 July 2007.

B. Recommendations on the Millennium Development Goals

42. Since its inception, the Permanent Forum has devoted a great deal of attention to the Millennium Development Goals. In addition to the fourth and fifth sessions, which addressed the Millennium Development Goals in depth, the Forum has issued recommendations on the Millennium Development Goals every year. It is also important to note the close link between the Millennium Development Goals and data collection and disaggregation, which is addressed separately in this report.

43. The secretariat of the Permanent Forum has carried out desk reviews of national Millennium Development Goal reports in 2006, 2007 and 2008 in order to analyse to what degree indigenous peoples' issues were addressed in those reports, as well as to see whether indigenous peoples participate actively in Millennium Development Goal monitoring at the national level. Despite some progress, the desk reviews have consistently concluded that indigenous peoples are not sufficiently included in national Millennium Development Goal reports, nor do they participate in the design and development of the reports. Another worrying trend is the fact that in several reports, indigenous peoples are not referred to directly, but rather through analysis of regional or rural disparities or under the grouping of "vulnerable populations". Finally, very few of the reports analysed present disaggregated data specifically reflecting the situation of indigenous peoples with regard to the Millennium Development Goals. In sum, the conclusions from these desk reviews underline the need to better include indigenous peoples in Millennium Development Goal implementation and monitoring processes at the country level.

C. Recommendations on urban indigenous peoples and migration

44. The Forum has issued a series of recommendations regarding urban indigenous peoples and migration. The International Organization for Migration (IOM), UN-Habitat and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean have played crucial roles in the implementation of these recommendations.

45. With the support of the Government of Canada, UN-Habitat, IOM, ECLAC and the secretariat of the Permanent Forum jointly organized an expert group meeting on urban indigenous peoples and migration, held in Santiago, from 27 to 29 March 2007.[16] Following recommendations from the Permanent Forum and from

[16] See E/C.19/2008/4/Add.7.

the expert group meeting, UN-Habitat, through the Inter-Agency Support Group, has been coordinating the elaboration of policy guides on indigenous peoples and employment and local economic development, education, health, transition/settlement services, cultural and linguistic continuity, human security and housing.

46. The Government of Canada has been the main supporter for keeping urban indigenous issues at the forefront by supporting focused meetings on this topic at major events such as the fourth World Urban Forum in Nanjing in December 2008 and at the Aboriginal Policy Research Conference in Ottawa in March 2009. The Government of Canada also hosts lunches during the sessions of the Permanent Forum to bring together relevant United Nations agencies, Permanent Forum members and States to work together on this important issue.

47. IOM has led the establishment of a task team on indigenous peoples and migration in the Inter-Agency Support Group. IOM has also reported on its programmes that address the situation and rights of indigenous migrants in Ecuador, Costa Rica and Colombia.

48. ECLAC has reported on ongoing efforts to disaggregate migration data to reflect the situation of indigenous peoples. This work has been carried out in the context of the ECLAC/Inter-American Development Bank project on migration and development.

D. Recommendations on indicators and data collection and disaggregation

49. The issue of data collection and disaggregation is very closely linked to economic and social development, as data plays a crucial role in ascertaining and monitoring the situation and rights of indigenous peoples. The Forum has therefore issued recommendations on this issue throughout its sessions. One of the main results in this regard has been the implementation of regional and thematic workshops on indicators relevant to indigenous peoples under the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Millennium Development Goals. Through these workshops, a series of indicators of indigenous peoples' well-being has been developed. The results of the workshops are summarized in a global synthesis report.[13]

50. Before these workshops, the Inter-Agency Support Group had carried out a review to take stock of existing indicators within the United Nations system that address indigenous peoples' issues.[17] Also, the secretariat of the Permanent Forum and UNDP supported indigenous experts in Nepal in the development of a study and publication of data and statistics on indigenous peoples.

51. The United Nations Statistics Division has been a crucial partner in terms of data collection and disaggregation. Through its Demographic and Social Statistics Branch, the Division has included indigenous peoples' issues in the Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses, Revision 2.[18] Another important initiative is the development of a website to disseminate data on

[17] See E/C.19/2006/3/Add.1.

[18] ST/ESA/STAT/SER.M/67/Rev.2.

ethnocultural characteristics and other information relevant to statistics on indigenous people.[19]

52. ECLAC has also played a pioneering role in the disaggregation of data on indigenous peoples in Latin America and the Caribbean. The Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre-Population Division of ECLAC developed a sociodemographic system on indigenous peoples of Latin America in collaboration with the Fondo Indigena. ECLAC has also worked closely with the Pan American Health Organization to improve health data on indigenous peoples. ECLAC has contributed to the dissemination of data on the situation of indigenous peoples in the region through the inclusion of chapters on indigenous peoples in the 2006 and 2007 editions of its flagship publication, ECLAC *Social Panorama of Latin America*. Jointly with UNICEF and UNFPA, ECLAC has been working towards the inclusion of disaggregated data on indigenous peoples and Afrodescendants in the 2010 round of censuses in the region. Activities in this area included a workshop held in Santiago from 19 to 21 November 2008, which brought together 100 experts from national statistical institutes, indigenous and Afrodescendant organizations, and academic institutions.

53. In terms of Governments, Mexico and Argentina have both reported on ongoing data disaggregation efforts in their housing and population censuses. In a similar trend, UNICEF included questions related to mother tongue, religion and ethnic group in its last round of Multi-Indicator Cluster Surveys and UNFPA has supported the Government of Nicaragua in improving the questionnaire for the national population census to more adequately gather specific data on indigenous peoples.

IV. Facilitating factors and constraints[20]

54. Some factors that have facilitated implementation are:

(a) The role of the Inter-Agency Support Group as a node for cooperation and coordination among agencies and a catalyst for the implementation by agencies of the recommendations of the Permanent Forum;

(b) The role played by the secretariat of the Forum in disseminating the final reports and recommendations of the Forum, and in providing follow-up and support, particularly in the case of joint activities;

(c) Addressing recommendations as specifically as possible to agencies, rather than more generic recommendations addressed at "development actors" or the United Nations system;

(d) The active engagement and commitment of focal points on indigenous issues in individual agencies in pursuing the recommendations addressed to their agencies;

(e) Contact with agencies, such as official visits of the Forum, formal and informal discussions during the sessions, and exchanges during meetings and

[19] See http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/sconcerns/popchar/default.htm.

[20] See E/C.19/2006/9; this section draws from the analysis and state of implementations of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues at its first to third sessions.

workshops, can help the Forum have a clear idea of what is feasible for the agencies and how recommendations from the Forum can facilitate their work on indigenous peoples' issues;

(f) Special themes and special half-day discussions play a key role in highlighting particular issues or regions, creating an impetus for the implementation of relevant recommendations;

(g) Indigenous organizations and leaders at the national level can play a key role in engaging their Governments and United Nations agencies and advocating for the implementation of the recommendations of the Forum.

55. Some constraints or obstacles to implementation and monitoring are:

(a) Limited financial and human resources among agencies and Governments to implement the recommendations addressed to them;

(b) Lack of awareness of indigenous peoples' issues continues to be a challenge among staff and senior managers of agencies;

(c) Some of the recommendations of the Forum are, understandably, very broad in nature, which makes monitoring impossible in some cases. It is also difficult in many cases to follow up on recommendations addressed to Governments and indigenous peoples' organizations because of a lack of reporting;

(d) The sheer number of recommendations issued by the Forum makes it difficult for its secretariat, with its limited financial resources and staff, to adequately follow up on their implementation;

(e) Indigenous peoples' issues challenge dominant paradigms, and this is often a source of discomfort for some United Nations staff and Government officials.

V. Conclusions and recommendations

56. **The Permanent Forum may wish to consider reducing the number of recommendations issued during its annual sessions. This would facilitate both implementation and monitoring. The decision of the Forum to change its working methods and alternate between policy and follow-up can be one positive step in this direction.**

57. **In general, United Nations agencies and other intergovernmental bodies have responded well to the recommendations of the Forum on economic and social development, especially when these are addressed specifically. This is particularly the case with recommendations requesting studies and expert meetings.**

58. **The recommendations of the Forum regarding the Millennium Development Goals, while influencing the work of agencies at headquarters level, are not yet being fully implemented at the national level. This will require a concerted effort by United Nations country teams.**

59. **In terms of Governments, the follow-up process is more difficult because of a lack of reporting from many States. Those States that have provided reports to the Forum should continue doing so.**

60. **Indigenous peoples' organizations should also be encouraged to participate more actively in the reporting and follow-up process at the local, national and international levels, and in the sessions of the Forum.**

61. **The Forum should explore a methodology to encourage United Nations country teams to report and participate in the follow-up process, as is currently the case with the Ecuador United Nations country team.**

62. **In order to strengthen reporting, agencies should as much as possible refer specifically to the recommendations of the Forum, rather than list the activities they have implemented on indigenous peoples' issues. This methodology would result in reports that are more analytical.**

63. **In order to strengthen monitoring and follow-up to the recommendations of the Permanent Forum, the secretariat should improve the recommendations database. This would involve re-examining the methodology used to update the database, including among other measures, going beyond reports received from Governments, agencies and NGOs and examining the proceedings of the Forum sessions. This would entail considerable staff time and perhaps financial resources, but would be a positive step in strengthening follow-up.**

64. **Many of the recommendations of the Forum are labelled as "ongoing" in the recommendations database. It should be understood that many of the recommendations, because of their broad, comprehensive nature, will require a long-term approach to their implementation.**

65. **Good practices in the implementation of recommendations on economic and social development should be compiled and disseminated.**

66. **The recommendations of the Forum on economic and social development have certainly played a catalytic role in guiding and improving the work of the United Nations system on indigenous peoples' issues.**